

**JOINT MEETING
July 28, 2014**

Present: Don Soltman, Chair; Bob Lokken, Co-Chair; Senator Steven Thayne; Representative Donna Pence; Superintendent Gaylen Smyer; Alan Millar, Cheryl Charlton, Valerie Aker, Tom Taggart, Cindy Wilson, Bill Brulotte, George Harad, Katie Graupman, Roger Brown, and Jason Hancock.

Not Present: Senator Roy Lacey; Representative Reed DeMordaunt; Dr. Corrine Mantle-Bromley; and Anne Ritter

Others Present: Marilyn Whitney and Tracie L. Bent, State Board of Education

Co-Chairman Bob Lokken called the meeting to order and thanked all committee members for their hard work and dedication over the past three months. Mr. Lokken described the structure for the day's presentations: each work group would have a total of 30 minutes to present their work and preliminary directions. Committee members were directed to listen carefully and provide feedback at the end of each presentation. One hour would be devoted in the afternoon for topics needing deeper discussion.

Autonomy and Accountability Work Group

Members: Bob Lokken, Chair; Representative Reed DeMordaunt; Representative Donna Pence; Superintendent Gaylen Smyer; Anne Ritter, Valerie Aker and George Harad.

Areas of Focus: Governor's Task Force Recommendations:

- 5. Revamp the State's Accountability Structure Involving Schools**
- 6. Empower Autonomy by Removing Constraints**
- 7. Annual Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Continuous Focus on Improvement**

- #5 Revamp the State's Accountability Structure Involving Schools**
#7 Annual Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Continuous Focus on Improvement

Bob Lokken presented the findings of the group. (See attached report for further detail.) He stated that the only viable approach to achieve Idaho's 60% goal¹ is through the continuous improvement process (CIP) which is the path by which Massachusetts moved from "middle of the pack" to world class schools.

¹ 60% of Idahoans, age 24-35, will have achieved a postsecondary certificate or degree by year 2020.

Objectives and Components:

The objective of the accountability system and district annual planning should be to support the State's goal to have 60% or more of its students prepared for career or college.

To achieve this goal, the accountability and annual planning system must have two major components:

1. The first component is designed to provide state intervention and assistance for struggling or failing schools.
2. The second component is designed to create dynamics that will propel good schools to become great schools, and great schools to continually advance. The design of the second component differs from the first, in that it is founded on continuous improvement and relies on local control and transparency to establish accountability to the local community.

Proposed Recommendations:

1. We recommend that the 5-Star Ranking System be revised and refined to facilitate accurate and fair measurement and ranking of schools and districts that require intervention and assistance.

- This system allows schools and districts to be sorted into categories that are either "superior", "adequate" or "failing". Failing schools should receive additional assistance from the State Department of Education in the form of expert assistance and additional resources. Failing schools that refuse additional assistance or do not "turn around" within a period of time would trigger more forceful intervention on the part of the State.
- Revisions to the existing 5-star system should include:
 - Adjusting the balance between student growth, school achievement, and other relevant measures. As the system is currently designed, too much weight is placed on growth and other relevant measures, often in response to federal regulation. The work team already in place to review the 5-star system should receive and consider this feedback.
- The State's intervention and assistance program for failing schools should:
 - Initially focus on resource and technical support and encouragement. Only if the school in question continues to fail and/or the district refuses outside assistance or demonstrates repeatedly that local leadership is unable to turn the school around, should the State intervention become more forceful.

- If necessary, the ultimate intervention should include replacing local leadership (principal/superintendent) that has demonstrated, for whatever reason, that they are unable to turn around a failing school. Without this level of intervention, the state would be failing its constitutional and fiduciary responsibility, and the cost of this failure would be born directly by the students in that school and indirectly by the community and state when those students are not prepared for career and/or college. (For further notes on the issue of to whom the local superintendent is accountable, see the last section of this document.)
- If federal regulations allow, alternative schools should be removed from this part of the accountability system. An alternative ranking system should be explored that is clear, and more specifically tailored to alternative schools.

2. We recommend that the State implement an Annual Planning Cycle and Continuous Process Improvement Plans that Lead to Achievement Scores that Align to the 60% Goal.

“Turn every good school into a great school”

1. Update the State’s strategic planning law to focus on continuous annual improvement;
 2. Each school district, led by its board and superintendent, should be required to prepare annually a performance improvement plan, setting clear, measureable goals to improve achievement in the coming school year.
- 3. We recommend the state offer professional development and collaborative training and support for local boards/leadership to develop awareness of and competencies in continuous improvement practices.**
- 4. We recommend that the timing of data be reviewed and adjusted to align with budget and annual planning deadlines for both school boards and teachers. The timeliness of the State's report information is critical to the districts' annual planning process. Today, data are delivered too late for analysis and planning work while teachers are still on contract.**

Discussion:

Don Soltman pointed out that Idaho’s education system K-12 would need to operate at more than 60% preparedness in order to achieve the ultimate 60% certificate/degree goal. Marilyn Whitney added that one of the biggest barriers to the 60% goal is the remediation rate in math and English language arts. Two year colleges report that nearly three-quarters of entering students need remediation; four-year universities report a remediation need of approximately one-third of students. Many of the elements in the current 5-Star system are required by federal mandate to

comply with Idaho's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver. The proposed changes to the 5-Star system will require an amendment to the waiver. Bob Lokken said that the 5-Star System only applies to approximately 5 percent of Idaho schools; the CIP path to great schools applies to the other 95 percent.

Don Soltman said that administrators prefer to know the metric and then figure out the metric themselves. Alan Millar suggested a smorgasbord approach. Bob Lokken replied that district would benefit from connecting and collaborating. Knowing how their school is doing compared to its cohort group with promote best practice collaboration and move all schools forward.

#6 Empower Autonomy by Removing Constraints

Bob Lokken advised that Marilyn Whitney and Tracie Bent have reviewed the Administrative Rule book governing education to identify rules which may be obsolete. In addition, Superintendent Smyer has interviewed numerous other superintendents and compiled a list of areas which they feel are unduly burdensome. The Autonomy and Accountability committee will study these areas during August and draft recommendations. In addition, they will investigate the applicability of the SAT 500 score in the context of professional-technical education.

High Expectations Work Group

Members: Tom Taggart, Chair; Senator Steven Thayn, Alan Millar, Cindy Wilson, Cheryl Charlton.

Areas of Focus: Governor's Task Force Recommendations:

- #1: Shift to a Mastery Based System where students advance based upon content mastery, rather than seat time requirements.**
- #4: Ensure that all students have access to advanced opportunities by expanding offerings.**
- #13: Shift from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Funding Model to Average Daily Enrollment/ Membership to enhance fiscal stability and remove current barriers to personalized and/or mastery learning.**

Tom Taggart cautioned that the work of all committees will only be successful if everyone is willing to take the time and provide the resources necessary to make the recommendations work. The process of the committees has been correct, and the membership of the committees has been diverse and relevant. Idaho needs to recognize its current reality and remember the long term view for better outcomes.

#1 Mastery Based System.

Alan Millar said that the original Governor's Task Force had a simplistic view that a mastery model would change education in Idaho. It envisioned a mastery based classroom where students progress at their own rate toward performance goals. Students use their own data to set their own goals, and once they master a skill or lesson, they move on to the next level. This would change the classroom model, where teachers typically would work with smaller groups. Students would be more involved in setting their own learning targets and monitoring progress towards them.

Research from Maine and other states indicate that there is no wide scale adoption of a mastery-based model. Rather, states are using pilots programs, professional development and training to create these models.

Proposed Recommendations:

The committee recommends a two-pronged approach to implementing a mastery based educational model. The first approach applies to grades K-6. A separate approach applies to grades 7-12 and is based on the Advanced Opportunities Programs (Recommendation #4) and is discussed in that section.

- 1. We recommend that Idaho implement a pilot program that provides funding to encourage districts and schools to create their own mastery based models, tailored to local conditions and opportunities.**
- 2. We recommend that Idaho provide funding for professional development programs to assist districts/schools in implementing mastery based models.**
- 3. We recommend that Idaho educate districts regarding Idaho law/rule. Nothing in Idaho law prevents districts from advancing students based on mastery or competency-based models;**
- 4. We recommend that the State Department of Education prioritize federal or other grants to support districts who are implementing mastery programs with preference in rural districts.**

George Harad asked how a mastery model would deal with socialization issues if some children mastered subject but were not emotionally ready to be with older students, or if others were held back. Tom Taggart said that in reality, children are often proficient in some areas but not in others, and Cindy Wilson likened the concept to the "one room school house" with considerable interaction and social mobility. Alan Millar reminded the committee that mastery is not minimal competency, but proficiency. Bob Lokken saw this

model as keeping the social cohort together but getting more personalized instruction in the classroom. The teacher's role became one of targeted intervention.

Alan Millar said that mastery would necessarily need an agreed upon standard of measurement to know when a student had achieved proficiency.

#4 Advanced Opportunities.

Senator Thayne discussed the group's vision for grades 7-12, beginning with the 8 in 6 program to funnel students more quickly through those grades. The goal was not to graduate students early, but to allow them to qualify for dual credit opportunities while in high school and become eligible for a state sponsored scholarship program.

Proposed Recommendations

- 1. We recommend that the relevant sections of Idaho Code pertaining to advanced opportunities be consolidated into a single chapter which will provide better clarity to districts, institutions and school boards.**
- 2. We recommend that the following changes be made to current advanced opportunities programs:**
 - 1. Eliminate the 10 percent participation cap in the 8 in 6 program;**
 - 2. Remove restriction to online courses in the 8 in 6 program to allow for courses taken in traditional schools.**
 - 3. Remove the requirement that students pay 25 percent of fees in the Fast Forward (\$200/\$400) program in order to eliminate barriers to those who need it most and to simplify reimbursement to districts.**
- 3. We recommend follow-on work in 2-3 years to simplify and consolidate the Advanced Opportunities programs after review of Fast Forward data.**
- 4. We support working with legislators to create scholarships to provide assistance to students who earn college credit in high school.**
 - 1. For 9 college credits earned in high school, the student would receive \$1,000 per year for 2 years;**
 - 2. For 18 college credits earned in high school, the student would receive \$2,000 per year for two years.**
 - 3. For 30 college credits earned in high school, the student would receive \$3,000 per year for two years.**
- 5. We recommend that Idaho Code Section 33-118, 100.04b be revised to require annual review of the 8th Grade Plan in grades 9-12.**

- 6. The committee believes that college/career counseling is key to reaching Idaho's 60 percent goal. We recommend that a position be created at the State Department of Education to prioritize college/career counseling in all districts.**
- 7. We recommend the legislature appropriate funds specifically for districts to implement college/career counseling using a model that best fits their needs.**

Cindy Wilson reminded the committee that the State currently pays for a K-12 education; under advanced opportunities, the State would still pay for K-12, but some of those years would be in dual credit courses. The proposed scholarship program would also encourage students to stay in Idaho.

Most districts do not use the 8th grade plan effectively, primarily because they do not have the staff, and parents do not see the benefits. Advanced opportunities, such as 8 in 6 and Fast Forward have created incentives that did not previously exist, but parent/student awareness and planning needs to begin earlier in order to take advantage of these programs. Simplifying and consolidating the Advanced Opportunities programs will help.

Encouraging parents and students to think about career earlier than 8th grade is key to reaching the State's 60% goal.² Currently, schools tend to work with the only the upper quartile of students on a traditional 4-year college path. The 60% goal mandates that schools reach more students who may choose a professional-technical certificate.

The committee further envisions that within 2-3 years, the State would fund 100% of all successfully completed dual credit courses, credit-bearing advanced placement courses, and transferable PTE courses while in high school and encourage students to apply for scholarships.

The committee has explored several college career counseling models, including AVID, Near-Peer and other leadership roles, and implementation of a remote career-counseling model. These models could be funded as block grants. The AVID program has proven results in Idaho and elsewhere and is designed to reach the "middle" group of students, rather than the top quartile. Both Alan Millar and Tom Taggart found a bias of school counselors toward four-year universities, whereas opportunities in professional technical education also need support.

Moving forward, the committee plans to survey school counselors, superintendents and administrators in order to gain insight into how college/career counseling can best be integrated into every middle and high school.

² 60 percent of Idahoans aged 24-35 to have a certificate or degree by year 2020.

13. Funding Model.

Tom Taggart reported on the group's conclusions regarding Idaho's funding model. While Tim Hill and Joyce Popp did think some minor simplification could be gained from changing to an enrollment based funding model, the High Expectations Group concluded that the "pain outweighed the benefits" with no clear simplification ISEE uploads, applicability to mastery based models, or fiscal stability to districts.

Proposed Recommendations:

- 1. We recommend that the state continue with Average Daily Attendance funding; however, we recognize that the current formula needs to be updated in a number of areas to address multiple attendance, virtual schools and other funding issues.**
- 2. We recommend that the current attendance minimum requirements of 2.5 hours for a half day, and 4.0 hours for a full day of attendance be removed and a per credit model developed in its place.**
- 3. We recommend that the current restriction on funding more than one FTE be removed and state funding provided in certain situations.**
- 4. We recommend that a subcommittee be formed comprised of large and small districts, charter and traditional schools, online schools, SDE staff, and the IDLA to explore these areas further and report back.**

Discussion:

Funding model: The committee's perception when we began this process was that the mastery-based model would need a different funding mechanism. However, research into what other states are doing has led to the conclusion that implementation of master-based models do not require changing from ADA to enrollment funding. There may be no need to completely change the funding formula for schools, but rather make the current formula work better.

The original Task Force had hoped that funding on enrollment would release some requirements in the Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE) data points, provide fiscal stability, and encourage mastery based education models. Based on the committee's research, we find only small gains in reporting requirements, minimal improvement in fiscal stability, and no need to change to enable moving to a mastery based system.

Other challenges in funding exist, however, such as multiple attendance, and virtual charter schools for which the committee recommends further study.

Next Steps:

- Work with Board and Department staff to identify appropriate funding amounts to recommend.
- Draft legislative language for advanced opportunities consolidation.
- Finalize survey for counselors (to be sent late August).

Innovation and Collaboration Work Group:

Members: Cori Mantle-Bromley, Chair, Don Soltman, Senator Roy Lacey, Bill Brulotte, and Katie Graupman.

Areas of Focus, Governor's Task Force Recommendations:

- #5 Statewide electronic collaboration system.**
- #10 Educator and student technology devices with appropriate content.**
- #17 Site-based collaboration among teachers and leaders.**
- #18 Training and development of superintendents and school boards.**

Bill Brulotte said the statewide electronic collaboration system (ISEE and SchoolNet) had seen numerous problems and delays in the upload and return of useful data. As a result, the collaboration piece was getting lost. Now that the State has stopped funding SchoolNet, districts are left on their own to contract with the developer to make upgrades, or find a new system altogether. The Office of Performance Evaluations is charged with studying and reporting on this system. Their report will be available in January 2015.

Proposed Recommendations:

- 1. We recommend that the Data Management Council (DMC) to oversee the entire longitudinal data system in Idaho.**
- 2. We recommend that the Director of Research of the Office of the State Board of Education Chair the DMC, and report annually to the State Board of Education and to the Legislature on the state of the project, accuracy of data, and future needs/plans.**

Discussion:

The Data Management Council was created by the Board to oversee the creation, maintenance, and usage of the Single Longitudinal Data System (SLDS).

The SLDS consists of ISEE, the postsecondary longitudinal data system, and selected data from the Idaho Department of Labor.

The Data Management Council has representation from the Office of the State Board, public postsecondary institutions, the State Department of Education, urban and rural school districts, the Division of Professional-Technical Education, and the Department of Labor.

The Data Management Council has identified, in policy, four areas of responsibility:

- Data Standards and Quality
- Access and Security
- Change Management and Prioritization
- Training and Communication

3. Schools need accurate and timely data.

The Legislature's Office of Performance Evaluations (OPE) is conducting an extensive study of the current state of the Idaho's longitudinal data system (LDS), the Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE) and SchoolNet, the state sponsored Instructional Improvement System (IIS).

The Innovation and Collaboration Group recommends that it wait for the OPE report, due January 2015, before making further recommendations.

- A. On a preliminary basis, the Innovation and Collaboration Group does not feel that a single state-supported ISS system, such as SchoolNet, is in the school districts' best interests. Instead, we believe that districts should have the flexibility to choose the system which best meets their needs provided that the system fulfills State reporting requirements.
- B. Individual vendors, such as SchoolNet, Mileposts, and Skyward, have more technical resources and incentives to work with districts in a timely manner than the State Department of Education. They are in a better position to:
 - a. Taylor IIS systems for district needs in a timely manner;
 - b. Conform district data to state reporting needs.

Discussion:

Tom Taggart suggested that some areas of reporting could be done monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually, which might be a way to simplify ISEE reporting. Marilyn Whitney assured the committee that the Senate's data security bill, passed during the 2014 Legislative Session, mandated that vendors must keep student data confidential and cannot use it for secondary purposes or share it to third parties.

#10 Educator and student technology devices with appropriate content:

Proposed Recommendations:

- 1. We recommend that the State continue its plans to provide broadband access and wireless infrastructure to all Idaho schools.**
 - A. Connectivity is the single most important need in schools. Without it, all other technology is compromised.
 - B. The current system used in high schools cannot connect to multiple schools without experiencing technical problems such as the need for two or three sites.
- 2. We recommend that the technology grant pilot program to schools be discontinued and that funding be made available to all districts for technology needs. Students must have access to appropriate 1:1 devices from K-12 to support learning.**
 - A. We recommend that the 2013 and 2014 technology grant projects be evaluated for lessons learned. We believe that the pilot projects benefit individual schools but do not necessarily lead to scalable innovation.
 - B. Choice of technology devices should be left to individual schools which have the knowledge to determine what works best for them.
 - C. Implementation of technology and the cultural shift in teaching takes time.

The “Next Generation Classroom” will be defined, not in what is has, but in what it does to provide the skills needed for success in a post-secondary education or career. The Next Generation Classroom will:

- A. Utilize technologies to meet life-long learning challenges;
 - B. Support personalized learning based on data-driven goals for instruction;
 - C. Create an instructional environment which shifts the role of the teacher to facilitator and enhances peer-to-peer interaction;
 - D. Combine discipline knowledge and research techniques to solve problems;
 - E. Provide performance-based learning which requires students to demonstrate mastery based on high, clear and commonly-shared expectations;
 - F. Construct learning experiences through both the geographic and internet-connected community; and
 - G. Authenticate the student’s voice which is the deep engagement of students in directing and owning their individual learning.
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- 3. We support the efforts of the Tiered Licensure/Career Ladder Committee to change how information technology personnel are funded in order to allow districts the ability to pay those professionals commensurate with market rates.**

Schools need two types of experts:

- A. **Those with technical skills to support infrastructure and devices;**
 - B. **Those with the pedagogical skills to understand classroom needs and encourage integration efforts.**
4. **Keyboard skills are becoming increasingly important in early elementary school years. We recommend that mechanical keyboards for tablets be made available for student use. We recommend that keyboards be purchased with district technology funds.**
- A. **This is especially true since the SBAC requires elementary students to type their answers.**
 - B. **Some districts may wish to use technology funding to purchase laptops with keyboards rather than tablet keyboards.**

#17 Site-based collaboration among teachers and leaders:

Proposed Recommendations:

- 1. **We recommend that the school year be increased by 3 days (24 hours) to allow for additional paid job-embedded professional development and collaboration. This time should be construed separately from professional development training relating to Idaho Core Standards.**
- 2. **We recommend that job-embedded professional development and collaboration be scheduled weekly based on school schedules and student needs.**
- 3. **We recommend that collaboration skills training be available to all participating staff.**

#18 Training and development of superintendents and school boards:

Proposed Recommendation:

- 1. **We support the Governor's Task Force recommendation calling for further development and implementation of the Idaho Standards for Effective Principals, which includes ongoing implementation and support for administrator training in the Danielson Framework for Teaching model through TeachScape proficiency exams.**
- 2. **The 2014 Legislature passed HB521 which allows school boards to apply for reimbursement of training programs. Each school board will be**

responsible for developing an annual strategic plan. We support the recommendations of the Autonomy and Accountability Group which is refining the current legislation.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Superintendent Gaylen Smyer echoed the need for college/career advisors. Current counselors are overwhelmed and would need professional development for college/career advising. Alan Millar said that continuing to fund an existing model does not change anything. He suggested that several creative avenues exist, such a remote advising, district sharing, etc. Cheryl Charlton thought that the counselor survey would help identify solutions.

Bob Lokken advised that each committee now needs to add a fiscal impact statement to each of their recommendations. The public comment period will occur through the State Board of Education after they review the recommendations in October. The committee agreed to hold a final meeting on September 8, 2014 to review, vet and vote on their final recommendations.

Roger Brown addressed the committee on the need for the members' continuing support to advocate the recommendations. The committee members have done the work, but the legislators will need assurance that the work has been done and that educators have had a role in crafting the recommendations.

Mr. Brown applauded the committee for its work in creating the vision for education in Idaho. The 2013 Governor's Task Force for Improving Education and the 2014 Education Improvement Committees' work has a life beyond a governor or a superintendent or a legislator – it is sustainable beyond politics.

Bob Lokken said that, having served on the original Task Force, he knows that members will be approached by television and media who may look for divisions, and each member needs to decide for themselves how to respond. For himself, Mr. Lokken will try to make a choice of leadership to send a message of hope to the citizens of Idaho. Idaho has a lot of work to do to get to the 60 percent goal, and it needs all of the people to get there.